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## **STATE TAKES TOUGHER STAND ON METHAMPHETAMINE**

*Legislation aimed at deterring production*

LANSING — Fines and penalties for the production of methamphetamine in Michigan will increase under a package of seven bills passed today in the Senate.

“Methamphetamine is a highly addictive drug that can kill or severely damage the life of users, but it also tears apart families, and its production contaminates the environment,” said Sen. Alan Sanborn (R-Richmond Twp), one of the bill sponsors. “This package of legislation is aimed at providing greater protections from the hazards associated with meth production, including toxic pollution and the destruction of public places, as well as increasing criminal penalties for producers.”

Methamphetamine production is a growing problem throughout Michigan, with clandestine labs springing up in rural and urban areas, in barns, garages, apartments, storage areas and vehicles, rendering them contaminated and unsafe for future use or occupancy. Toxic byproducts given off during production pose serious environmental risks, as they are often dumped in public sewers or directly on the ground.

“Methamphetamine is a very dangerous drug, and its production is a hazardous process – facts that do not cause great concern to manufacturers,” said Sen. Alan Sanborn. “This legislation is intended provide a greater deterrent to methamphetamine production, while providing increased protection for the public and emergency personnel from explosions, fires, and other hazards methamphetamine production poses.”

The package of bills includes provisions that:

- Prohibit the possession of more than 12 grams of pseudoephedrine (with the exception of pediatric products), a chemical used in the production of methamphetamine;
- Increase to 20 years imprisonment the maximum penalty for those owning or possessing the places, chemicals or equipment used in production of the illegal stimulant;

(More)

- Create a new crime with a maximum penalty of four years imprisonment for people who transport anhydrous ammonia in unapproved containers;
- Require inspection of property determined to have been used for the production of methamphetamines, and requires public warnings if contamination is discovered.

Senate Bills 648-652, 698 and 777 now go to the House for consideration.